

**Jim Mikulanec '68** was selected as a 2025 Knutson-Smith Award recipient. The award recognizes individuals who have set exemplary standards in leadership, dedication, and ongoing contribution to Iowa's concrete paving industry.

**Perry Meyer '81** received the first-ever Iowa Hospital Association Lifetime Achievement Award after nearly 42 years of service with the Association. He retired from his position of Executive Vice President on December 31, 2025.

**Denise Ganfield Knaack '83** celebrated the premiere of her composition "Bell and Whistle," a duet for tuba and flute, at the Iowa Composer's Forum Festival of New Music held at the University of Northern Iowa on October 11, 2025.

**David Pearson '83** was honored by a substantial gift to support Modern Men: Coachella Valley Men's Chorus, given in his honor by his family foundation.

**Jill Cooper Bemis '89** took a position as the receptionist at All Creatures Small Animal Hospital. She and husband **Chris Bemis '87** recently moved back to Indianola after many years in Montana.

**Paula Sliefert '90** is employed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Sports Field Management Association and the Executive Director of the Professional Football Field Managers Alliance, which represents NFL Sports Field Managers.

**Clay Hess '95** released his first book, entitled "When Dad Falls Short: Finding Healing in God's Perfect Fatherhood" in fall 2025.

**Steve Vine '97** is now the Jail Supervisor at the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office.

**Michelle Yeoman '97** works as Administrative Support Assistant 3 with the Iowa Department of Education.

**Melissa Gress '04** earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Education degree from Drake University in 2025.

**Kim Lamon-Loperfido '04** started a new job as an NC-PAL social worker at Duke University.

**Chris Shaver '05** is now the Executive Director, Senior Lead Control Management Officer for Wells Fargo.

**Kari Koehler '06** works as a Knowledge Services Specialist at Proskauer Rose, LLP.

**Kylie Dittmer '07** is now the Business Manager for St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in West Des Moines.

**Bryan Geelan '07** is the Executive Director of Communications for West Des Moines Community Schools, a position he began in August 2024.

**Tia Nearmyer '07** is a founding partner of Valkyrie Strategies, a direct-mail firm built to support Democratic and progressive candidates running up and down the ballot.

**Tony Hager '08, Claire Oetting '22, and Elise Boulton '24** shared their expertise with students on a panel at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Sport Administration Symposium hosted at Simpson on April 9, 2026.

**Drew Riebhoff '10** works as a paralegal at the Law Office of Jessica Handy-Burris in Chicago.

**Nick White '10** works as a Financial Systems Manager for EquipmentShare.

**Emily Ledger '11** is now the Assistant to the Dean at the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University.

**Elyse MacDonald Morris '11**, earned a Master of Music (M.M.) degree from the University of Northern Iowa in May 2026.



In addition to her teaching job with Waukee schools, **Nella Thomas-Walker '13** is active in the Des Moines music scene, performing with the all-female cover band June Bugs DSM, pictured above.

**Steffi Lee Dwyer '15** is an associate attorney practicing immigration law at BrownWinick Law.

**Alex Severn '15, Jared Grove '16, and Kristina Smith '19** are serving on an advisory board for the Simpson math program, supported by a National Science Foundation IUSE grant.

**Dallas Downey '16** is self-employed as the managing principal of Risk Advisors of Iowa, a full-service insurance brokerage.

**Mary Hudson-Smith '17** earned a master's in education degree from National University in 2023, specializing in ESL Equity and Achievement. She is employed as an ESOL teacher at Waukee High School in Waukee, Iowa.

**Sami Wyatt '17** now serves as the TAP Coordinator for the Ames Community School District in Ames, Iowa.

**Nick Joslyn '18** presented the plenary address on the subject of “Localizing an Interdisciplinary Career in Mathematics” at the 2026 Midwest Undergraduate Mathematics Symposium, hosted at Simpson.

**Luke Sarver '19** works as Regional Sales Manager for Ring-O-Matic in Pella, Iowa.

**Ellen Willhoit '19** earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Kansas City University in 2024. She is currently a resident physician in pathology at the University of Chicago Medical Center.

**Jessica Arnold '20** is employed as an Animal Behavior and Wellbeing Coordinator at Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium in Omaha.



**Samantha Wuebker '20** delivered the 2025 Anita Zah's Memorial Lecture at Simpson, pictured above. She is in her 4<sup>th</sup> year of study toward her PhD in the Cell and Developmental Biology program at the University of Iowa.

**Alyssa Craven '21** is employed as a marketing coordinator for Premier Credit Union.

**Ian Dean '21** took a position as the New Business Development Manager at IFF Health Sciences.

**Danielle Roethler Dilling '21** was promoted to Senior Account Manager at Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield in December 2025.

**Jessica Stringer '24** is employed as a social media coordinator for the Carlson Law Firm, the largest personal injury law firm in the state of Texas.

**Kalen Stefanick '25** works as a retail team lead at the Mall of America.

We want to hear what you've been up to! Take a minute to share your updates with us—new jobs, degrees, marriages, babies, awards, honors – all of it! It's one of our favorite ways to celebrate what's happening across the Simpson community. Email [alumnioffice@simpson.edu](mailto:alumnioffice@simpson.edu) or visit <https://access.simpson.edu/register/updateSCinfo> to update your info!